



March 14, 2023

The Honorable Frank Kendall III  
Secretary of the Air Force  
Department of the Air Force  
1670 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20330-1670

Dear Secretary Kendall,

Thanks to continued support for the recapitalization of the Air National Guard (ANG) tactical airlift fleet, the Air Force is again undergoing a strategic basing process for C-130Js. As you move forward in this process, we write today in strong support of Bradley Air National Guard Base (CT) as the most cost effective and mission ready candidate for C-130J basing.

Bradley Air National Guard Base is home to the 103<sup>rd</sup> Airlift Wing, known as the "Flying Yankees." It is the third oldest ANG unit in the country with a history dating back to World War I. To support the Wing's relatively recent conversion to the C-130 mission, Congress, the State of Connecticut, and the Air Force have already made significant infrastructure investments in the Bradley Air National Guard Base. Over the course of the last decade, nearly \$100 million in facility construction and improvement has been executed at Bradley. As a result, the base is now the benchmark for "state of the art" facilities among all mobility bases and requires zero construction funding to fully support the C-130J mission today. In fact, during the 2021 round of C-130J basing, Bradley was assessed as having the lowest construction costs of all candidate bases. Since that time, the 103<sup>rd</sup> Airlift Wing has continued its relentless pursuit of facility improvement. With the fiscal year 2022 authorization of funds for a Composite Aircraft Support Equipment/Vehicle Maintenance Facility, Bradley Air National Guard Base is poised to become the crowned jewel of ANG bases.

In addition to extraordinary facilities, the 103<sup>rd</sup> Airlift Wing clearly excels in all aspects of mission related basing criteria. It is located only 7 miles from its primary training drop zone at Westover Air Reserve Base. It is only 60 miles from the Rhode Island Air National Guard's 143<sup>rd</sup> Airlift Wing. This proximity facilitates joint training opportunities as well as easy access to the 143<sup>rd</sup> Airlift Wing's new C-130J simulator. The 103<sup>rd</sup> Airlift Wing has also been called upon for numerous airlift and humanitarian operations since 2016, including hurricane relief missions,

troop movements, Central Command and Africa Command aviation package deployments, and joint North Atlantic Treaty Organization exercises.

We strongly support the continued recapitalization of the Air National Guard's C-130 fleet. The urgent need for C-130J recapitalization is underscored by the recent grounding of all C-130H units due to propeller barrel cracks. On January 24, 2023, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, General Daniel R. Hokanson, highlighted the need for modernized platforms. He cited the high cost of sustaining and operating these older systems, along with their decreased readiness, as factors that make the Air Force and the Air National Guard less effective.

We are confident that basing these new congressionally approved aircraft at locations with the lowest possible military construction costs and record of exceptional mission readiness would be the best use of these aircraft and taxpayer dollars. To that end, we want to express our continued support for allocation of upgraded C-130J aircraft for strategic laydown at Bradley Air National Guard Base in support of the Connecticut Air National Guard.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,



Joe Courtney  
Member of Congress



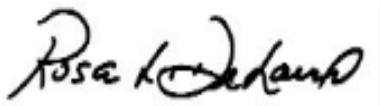
Ned Lamont  
Governor



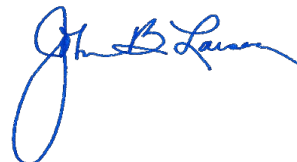
Chris Murphy  
U.S. Senator



Richard Blumenthal  
U.S. Senator



Rosa DeLauro  
Member of Congress



John Larson  
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Himes". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "J" and "H".

Jim Himes  
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jahana Hayes". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Jahana Hayes  
Member of Congress